

# Let Your Light Shine

by Tim Conway

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**Scripture:** Matthew 5:14, 1 Peter 2:11, Ephesians 2:10, Titus 3:8, James 2:14, 1 Timothy 6:18, Acts 9:36

**Topics:** "Let Your Light Shine", "Sacrificial Love and Kindness"

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## Description

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## Transcript

I read verses 14, 15, 16. You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden, nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.

Now verse 16 in our passage for today. Let your light so shine. I want to say two things.

So is not just added by the translators. It is there in the original, which means in this way. You have a city set on a hill that cannot be hidden.

Nobody lights a lamp and puts it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so, just like that. Let your life shine.

And by the way, this is the first imperative in the Sermon on the Mount. This verb, shine, is an imperative. This is the first place where our Lord comes off the indicative, and he is saying, here's a responsibility.

Here's something that he's pressing upon us. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father in heaven. Father, I ask you right now, these are your people for whom your son has died.

Lord, if you didn't spare Christ, then I pray that through the ministry of your Word today, you'll spare no valuable thing, no good thing, no precious thing, no helpful thing from your people here. If you'll give your son, then Lord, I pray that you'd give us what we need to properly hear this and to have the grace to live it out. I pray this in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen. So, here's the truth. From a spiritual standpoint, Christians are like a lamp that have been lit.

Now, I wanna show you something about the oil and the fire, the source of the light. Just remember this. Jesus said, if anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love them.

Now, this is what, I love John 14, 21, and 23. They just have some majorly precious promises. But get this, if anybody has my word and they keep my word, which that really is, that is characteristic of what a true Christian is.

That's how you can know a true disciple. Jesus said to those disciples who believed on him, if my word abides in you, if you keep my word, then you're truly my disciples. That truth is everywhere in the scripture.

If we say that we know him and we don't keep his commandments, you know what John says. So, what he says is this, that if you're basically characteristic Christian and his word abides in you, he says, my Father will love you. And that is so strange to put it in that order.

You keep my commandments and my Father will love you. But he also says this, we, meaning me and my Father, we will make our home or our abode with you. Now you think about that.

What is the Father called? The Father of lights. What is Christ called? Christ himself said, I'm the light of the world. They who sat in darkness have seen a great light.

Do you know when you go to the end of your Bibles, you find out that the new heavenly city, it says that there's no sun needed there, why? Christ is the light. And so if you take this Father of lights and this one who is the great light and they dwell within you, and then you have the spirit on top of that, Jesus himself said that the spirit, he will be with you and he will be in you. And that is the spirit that we looked at at Ephesians one, enlightens us.

He is the spirit of wisdom, of revelation. He enlightens our hearts. You have this, what the word that came to my mind, I don't even know if it is one, but we have a tri-illumination dwelling within us.

We have this trinity that indwells us. Have you ever thought about this? Christian, you are the temple of God. What was the truth about the temple? Where was it that the Shekinah glory was? Do you remember what happened when Solomon was dedicating the temple? The priests, could they minister there? They were driven away by the glory of God.

And do you know that that temple, we were talking about symbolism earlier. Do you know what the real temple is? We are being built together as a dwelling place for God by the spirit. That's what scripture teaches us.

It's, we are the place where the glory of God dwells. So it should not surprise us about this light. And you recognize this, it doesn't just say that we shine forth light.

Scripture actually says, you are light. You were once darkness. This is the truth that we have in Ephesians chapter five.

You were once darkness. Now you are light in the Lord. You know what we're like? We even have light bulb, we do.

Those are fluorescent lights up there. But you know that the reality is that we're kind of like the glass on a light bulb. It's really the electricity and the filament on the inside where the brightness comes from.

It's like that's the divine presence in there. He's the electricity. That's where the light comes from.

But brethren, there is an astonishing brightness. I don't know if you've ever come across this. Maybe you've read it and it just sounds so mysterious that you just kind of move past it.

Listen to this, in Isaiah 30 and verse 26. Now you don't have to turn there, but just listen to it. The light of the moon will be as the light of the sun.

And the light of the sun will be sevenfold as the light of seven days. When? When in the day that the Lord binds up the bruise of His people and heals the stroke of their wound. Now, here's what you don't want to do.

Obviously that has to do with the fact that Christ came and He brought light into this world. But what you don't want to do is you don't want to limit that brightness, that sevenfold brightness to Christ's coming and His dying because it includes all the days that follow. You see, we're in that age of brightness because, listen to this, even if our gospel is veiled, you'll recognize this in just a second, maybe you already do.

Even if our gospel is veiled, it's veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the God of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus, the Lord, and ourselves, your bondservants for Jesus' sake. Now listen, for it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shown in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Do you recognize what Paul's saying? Jesus has already died. Jesus has already ascended. And what he's saying is the very brightness that Christ brought through all of His teaching, through His miracles, and through His death, and through His resurrection and His ascension.

Do you recognize that we have been handed that light? And now we have the same truth. We have the four gospels. We have the accounts.

You see, it's a knowledge of these things that brings this light. With Christ coming and leaving, it's not like the light has dimmed. It's not like the light has diminished.

Do you realize the sending of the Spirit was to clothe the church with power so that we would indeed go out into the darkness and we would take that light? That's exactly what Paul is saying happened at his time to these Corinthians, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. And we can spread that light. And this is just, you know what he compares it to? God in the beginning saying, and let there be light.

And there was light. And he can speak that word. You know, he can speak that word to that Muslim you were talking to yesterday.

Let there be light. Because, and we know that, because we used to be in the darkness. At one time we were darkness, and now we are light in the Lord.

And the light came on. And the God who, it's just as supernatural as back in the beginning when God said, let there be light, and there was light. Now listen, I want you to recognize how bright this light is.

We may hardly even think anything of it. But the truth that we now have a seven fold brightness to anything at all that the sons of men have ever had revealed to them in previous generations. I want you to get the feel for it.

Now listen, I'm gonna basically give you two accounts. And I want you to see this reality come out of these accounts. Take one.

There was a day when Jesus basically rebuked, he found fault, he took issue with the cities that had seen all of his miracles. This comes out of Matthew chapter 11. They saw his miracles.

And listen to what he says to them. He began to rebuke the cities in which most of his mighty works had been done, because they did not repent. Woe to you, Chorazin, woe to you, Bethsaida, for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you. Now did you get that? More tolerable. See, the light that was shown to them now puts them in a position where having not repented in the face of this kind of light in the day of judgment, Tyre and Sidon are gonna have it easier than these folks.

But that's not all. And you, Capernaum, are you exalted to heaven? You'll be brought down to Hades. For if the mighty works that were done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.

But I say to you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you. Here's the question I would ask. What must I do? What must I personally do to find judgment day worse for me than for Sodom? Exactly.

The Sodomites, I mean, think about them. They were homosexuals. They wickedly wanted to rape angels.

And so you say, oh, what's worse than that? Being a pedophile, being a rapist, being a mass murderer? Nope. Just sit before the light. Exposed by Christ.

When he walked this earth, that's what these people did. Be exposed to that sevenfold brilliance of light and reject it. Christ putting himself on display, that's it.

Reject it. And I'll tell you what, on judgment day, you would gladly change places with the Sodomites. That's what he's saying.

But listen to this. In Mark 6, and you can find this in Matthew 10, I believe, whoever will not receive you and the light you share, I'm adding the light, but you understand, whoever will not receive you nor hear you, see, it's about what you're saying to them. When you depart from there, shake off the dust under your feet as a testimony against them.

Assuredly, I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city. And I'll tell you, there's no difference. And it's much like this.

If I asked you on this bright, clear, sunny day, in the middle of the day, to go outside and stare at the sun, you would say, I can't. I can't do that. I mean, you can't do that.

It'll hurt your eyes. But I'll tell you this. If I got, I mean, like a telescopic mirror, the kind that they would use in an observatory.

I mean, a mirror that is so polished and so flawless. And I went outside and I said, I don't want you to look at the sun. I just want you to look at this mirror and I'm gonna reflect the sun right into your face.

Just the same. You see, we're like the mirror. There's, whether you look at the sun or whether you look at those who are declaring the sun, we reflect the same brilliance.

And I'll tell you this, if they reject us, see those people there yesterday, they don't know what they do. And the people we speak to in our families, the people that, listen, there is a very sobering reality in all of this. I mean, you think about the light that the Jones could have on their family just in the next two weeks or so, in these days to come.

And do you recognize? Do you recognize what it says? That as we go through this world, much like as Christ did, the light we diffuse makes people accountable. We are based, do you recognize what we're doing? We compel them to come in. That's what the servants are supposed to do.

Compel, you see, we bring the invitation to the wedding supper of the lamb. You see, you're invited and they spit at us and they hate it. I had a girl yesterday tell me, you're 50 years old, you're this, you're that.

You have nothing to say to me. Oh, is that right? That the reality is as Christians, we have everything to say to them. We're inviting them to this supper, to this feast.

Everything is ready. Do you recognize the light? Do you recognize that when you tell people about the Christ, just as it's written in these four books, when you tell people about that, it's the same as if the people observe that. I mean, you've got that truth.

You're sharing that truth. No difference. The light is bright.

Our light lights up things about Christ just as Christ Himself lit things up. So much so that anybody that rejects our light, it'll be just the same as if they reject Christ Himself. You need to see that.

Brethren, I'll tell you this, wherever we go in life, Paul said, there's an aroma. We leave an aroma. To some, it is life unto life, to some, death unto death.

But the reality is that those that it's death unto death, do you recognize where you shine light? Do you recognize what it is for somebody to actually have a true Christian in their family or to go to a college and you have a Christian that sits in your classroom? Do you recognize what it is to have some true Christian share the truth with a person in this world? Suddenly it puts them in a position. They wouldn't even think so. This hardly computes to people in this world that they could be worse than Sodom and Gomorrah, but that's exactly what's being said, exactly.

The men and women of Sodom, they didn't live in the time of that brightness. In fact, Jesus says that if they had, they would have remained to this day for the world to have a true Christian come close to them. Do you recognize what it is? You see, when we come close to people and we shine the light, that is God expressing just an incredible kindness to that person.

Do you recognize that there are people that live all over this world that will live their entire lives and die with no clear presentation of the gospel? How many people do you think are born, they live and they die in China with its over a billion people, within India, over a billion people, atheistic China, Hindu, Muslim, India? I mean, we're talking billions of people in this world that live in some really difficult areas. How many people do you think live and die? How many people for generations? I'll tell you, have you ever seen, oh, the name escapes me because it's an Indonesian word. But have you ever seen, it's To Every Tribe? I think it is, To Every Tribe.

Anyways, one of the frontline mission agencies and they have put out videos. And in fact, and they've put out a handful of videos that are well worth watching. And in one of them, Indonesian tribes.

And they have a certain approach where they begin at Genesis 1, 1 and they go all the way through the Bible and they're doing that with these people. I honestly don't think that that's what Paul did. I don't think that's what the biblical preachers did.

I think you need to get to the gospel faster than starting in Genesis 1, 1 and working all the way through. But the fact is they take that approach and I'm not gonna fault them because they're out there on the front lines. And they were among an Indonesian tribe.

And I'll tell you, God moved. And the vast majority of these people were converted. And they have video of these people absolutely rejoicing.

And it morphs into sorrow. The people begin mourning and wailing and weeping. And then it goes back to rejoicing and back and forth.

And you know what they said was happening? The people were rejoicing because of the salvation that they had, but then they would be buried by the realization that all the generations of their tribes before that perished. You see, you come to the truth about heaven and hell, about salvation and then you start recognizing. The reason I'm bringing this up is because the people, they knew it.

Their fathers, their grandfathers, their great grandfathers had not had a clear presentation of the gospel. Do you recognize how many people in this world? Do you recognize for those people to be moving back and forth in that city center yesterday and actually having people that are proclaiming the truth and handing out tracts? It happened again yesterday. Hand tracts and people recoil from them.

I mean, they divert their path and they turn their shoulder. And it's almost like you just, it's almost like you held up a dead frog with just been run over several times and like, ah! And you know, the way they recoil. And the thing is, this world, so many live and die without this.

And what God is saying, what Christ is saying is listen, when people have the truth, to whom much is given, much is required. And what will judgment day be like? You're damned. And I sent my servant to you with that invitation.

He held it out to you. You recoiled like it was some kind of roadkill. I held out an invitation to you and you came and did ungodly things before the preacher.

I mean, for a person to reject that light and that kindness of God, I'll tell you what it does. It spells disaster for them. So wicked, so wicked were the Sodomites that God rained down fire and brimstone.

And I'll tell you, when you come to the New Testament, it says they're an example of what's gonna happen to the ungodly. And actually Jesus said, not just an example, but actually kind of a minor example. Like the people that have been exposed to it.

I mean, you have people that sit in churches and they sit under the truth. I think of our missionary over in Nepal. His brother has lived his life sitting under the truth in the church every Sunday and isn't saved every Sunday.

You speak the truth of the gospel to your neighbor, they reject it, don't repent. Jesus says, worst things are gonna happen to them that are gonna happen to Sodom and Gomorrah on that day. And here's the thing, none of this is reason to hide our light under the basket.

You see what you could start thinking is, wow, if I'm making the world more culpable by my light, more guilty, more responsible, well then better to hide the light. No, no, Jesus says what you wanna do is you wanna be like that city set on a hill, you wanna be like the lamp that gets lit and gets put on the lamp stand. You want to shine into all the house.

Our light is the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ shining through us. And we must strive to make that as bright as we possibly can. And I'll tell you this, we wanna use every possible means to make those rays go out there.

We wanna use tracks, we wanna use our mouths, we wanna use our feet, we wanna use our money, we wanna use everything we've got to make that light shine in word and deed. Why, why? If men are more guilty because of our light, then why not withhold our light? And you know what, I might try to convince you, well, the reason is because our light is needed for men and women and children to be saved. I might reason that way and certainly I don't think that would lack biblical argument, but you realize what Jesus says here? The greatest argument is not that when we shine forth our light, others get saved.

The primary reason is let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. It's the glory of God that's at stake. That's the primary thing.

Verses like this help us not become overly man-centered in our approach to life and the mission of the church and our evangelism, because listen, the primary thing is God is glorified when we're speaking about His Son. And that really is the primary objective that we need to aim at. Will people be more guilty because of the light? You know what Jesus didn't do? Jesus didn't pack up His bags and just go back to Nazareth and start nailing cabinets together.

Go back to being a carpenter, because the people that He was showing all of His mighty works in front of were gonna be more responsible, more damnable, in a more severe position than Sodom and Sidon entire. He didn't pack up and go home. He kept going.

He just went on to another place. In fact, Jesus taught us if you go into a place and they reject you, it is going to be worse for them. But He doesn't even say, well, beg and plead with them all the longer.

No, He actually says shake the dust off your feet and go on to the next place. And in the end, the real issue here is the glory of God. Now we need to talk about this just for a second.

There's no small matter. We need to stop and consider the glory of God. Glory.

It is the Hebrew kabod. Now I don't know if I'm saying that like a Hebrew, but there's a Reformed Baptist pastor from Israel and he came to my house and he showed me right away that they pronounce words entirely different. And you know, I reach over and grab his Bible and the Bible's backwards.

And so even there I was totally lost. But kabod is the Old Testament word typically translated glory. Who knows what the New Testament? Anybody have any idea? Doxa, doxology.

That is the New Testament. Now, glory basically signifies this, weighty, the idea of heavy. You remember how David said, do you think it's a light thing to be the king's son-in-law? See a light thing.

That means a trivial. That means a useless or worthless. You think it's just a light matter.

That's the opposite of heavy. Heavy has to do with important. Heavy has to do with weighty, greatness, abundance.

And the New Testament equivalent basically would lend itself to the same thing. So the word glory, let me give you some examples. You know this, this word shows up all the time in Scripture.

It's very commonly used to signify the excellency, the greatness, the beauty, the riches of something. Joseph said to his brothers, so you shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt. That's when he divulged himself to his brothers, sent him back to retrieve Jacob and bring him down to Egypt.

My glory. Joseph had glory. What? He had power.

He had riches. Or the devil took Jesus up on an exceedingly high mountain, and it says that he showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. Or you have this, ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory? Or the Apostle Paul talks about our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight.

There you actually have weight with it. An eternal weight of glory. Now you might wanna just stop there.

We have people, Judgment Day is going to find, it's gonna be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah. We have other people. You're gonna have an eternal weight of glory.

That is hardly, we don't even know what that means, but it is weighty. Think, if Joseph could be made second, and have all these riches at his disposal, that's the word glory. Or all the kingdoms of this world, they have a glory.

There's an eternal weight of glory. The word glory is also used in scripture to express the display. Glory often takes an internal reality that is being given expression.

So there's something that's true and it's breaking out. It's shining forth. It often signifies shining brightness or the radiating beams.

Listen to this. There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon. You know, 1 Corinthians 15 talks that way.

Or Ezekiel, he says, there was an appearance of the likeness of the glory of God. He saw an appearance of a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day. So the appearance of the brightness all around it.

That's how he describes it. Or do you remember Luke? You had the shepherds and suddenly the angels. An angel of the Lord stood before them and the glory of the Lord shone round them.

Or in Hebrews, it speaks about Christ, the son of God being the brightness, the radiance of the glory of God. Or in Revelation, he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain and showed me the great city. This is the church, the holy Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God.

Now you need to get this. This is the redeemed having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a Jasper stone, clear as crystal.

But that's the idea of glory. It's this eminence. It's the shining forth.

Or glory sometimes specifically refers to God's abundant goodness and grace. Think of this, that he would grant you according to the riches of his glory to be strengthened with might through his spirit in the inner man. Or my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

Do you recognize that when God lets loose with kindness to man, and it is expression of God's glory itself, that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy. You know that comes from Romans nine. The riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he's prepared beforehand for glory.

God's glory is also the honor that gets accorded to him by men. When men honor him, it is spoken of as glory. Glory.

Truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord. Or something like that. I will set my glory among the nations.

All the nations shall see my judgment, which I've executed. So it's the idea that when God is who God is and it gets seen, that is considered glory. Praise is called glory.

Psalms 50, 23, whoever offers praise glorifies me. The praise of God, think about what praising God is. It's this high esteem.

It's being in awe of him. It comes from somebody that has exalted thoughts of God. It's delighting.

I mean, you think of why would we break out in praise? We're singing this song. Some of you might've been going through the motions. Some of you not.

Some of you, something was welling up in your heart. It may be that even for some of us, part of it were words, but then there's portions that capture you. And suddenly your thoughts are lifted high.

You see that scripture speaks about that as glory, exalted thoughts of God, just delighting in his excellence and his perfections. Jesus says, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your father in heaven. Now notice this, we do the good works, but we don't get the glory.

In fact, it doesn't even say we are glorifying him. It says that the men before whom we do our good works, glorify our father in heaven. Now it's true that when we do these good works, we glorify him.

But the reality is what Jesus is speaking about here, what he's aiming at, is that the people before whom we do the good works, they will be the ones to glorify our father in heaven. So you think about this. It's like our good works are the light.

Our good works could be speaking the truth to people. They can be doing works of mercy in front of the onlooking world. And what the idea is, Jesus says, so let your light shine.

Let those rays shoot forth, the beams of sunshine, and they show forth from us. And you know what happens? They're made of the stuff that the sun itself is made of. It's kind of like I talked about that mirror, you reflect the light.

What they're doing is they're seeing God in us. Our light has God as its object. The knowledge we shine forth is the knowledge of God.

You see what people are doing is they look at what we are, they look at how we are, they look at what we do, and they see God in that. I mean, loving, merciful works that we do, that we shine forth in it, the very love of God. If we love one another, God abides in us and His love has been perfected in us.

You see, there's no separation. Basically, what we do in our works shines forth what's true of Him. What they see in us, they connect with our God.

And you can't get away from that. Ruby was telling me yesterday, she heard twice just recently about people saying, you know, don't judge God by His people. Well, yes and no.

I mean, there is a sense that we have defects and you don't want the world judging our God by our defects, but you know the reality is they do. And the reality is that Christ is saying, you need to appear in a certain way and have certain light and have certain good works so that the people will see us and they will glorify Him. So clearly there's a connection that Jesus is drawing on here that He wants us to come together.

Clearly what Jesus implies in Matthew 5, 16, we shine forth. Think about it. We shine forth with happiness and joy.

You know, the world is miserable. They woke up empty, despair, suicidal. That's the reality.

When people look and they see a people, you know, people in China, they're cold, they're heartless. China is a kind of place, a grandmother who threw acid in the face of her grandchild so that the grandchild would be more pitiful when they went out on the streets and begged. A guy driving a delivery van hit a child.

They had footage of it. He backed over the child several times because over there, if you leave them injured, you're responsible for the rest of your life, better off that they're dead. And so he just rolled over the child.

This is China. They're just heartless. The thing is, when we show forth joy, when we show forth the kindness, and you think about good works, the flavor of good works, we'll get to that in a second, but what we're aiming at is to have people look at us and to have the people in this dark world shout, what must their God be like? I mean, that's clearly what Jesus is wanting that connection to be made.

They look at us and they say, wow, their God is a certain way and they're gonna glorify him. Well, how do they glorify him? God gets glorified when people wanna worship him, when people are amazed by him,

they're put in awe of him, they see him as big, they see him as weighty, they see him as excellent, they see him as precious, they see him as beautiful. When they're staggered by that, we're his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works.

God prepared these things. You have to recognize, this is why we get saved. We get saved to be these good works producers and we're his workmanship and he's working in us.

So the glory of God is lifted up, it's recognized, it's acknowledged, that's what the beams of God's glory. They come from God, they come to us, they flow through us, out of us, in so doing, what do they do? They express who God is. If you think about it, Jesus came into this world doing good.

What did he do? We're supposed to imitate him. We're supposed to do the same good that he did. Have you ever noticed, Jesus didn't come into the world and jump buildings with a single leap.

He didn't stop freight trains in their path. He didn't do that. You know what he came? He came healing, he came feeding, he came helping, he came raising the dead, he came wiping away tears.

And that's what Christ did and we're supposed to walk in his paths. Now think about this, the closest parallel passage in our Bibles to this text in 5.16 in Matthew is this one in Peter. 1 Peter 2.11, Beloved, I beg you as sojourners.

Now isn't that interesting? Jesus commands us. The first imperative, Peter says, beloved. Good way to start, beloved.

I beg you, you see how God is with us? He commands us, he exhorts us, he pleads with us. I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works which they observe glorify God in the day of visitation. That is the closest parallel to this.

Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. What we see in this is God's commitment to uphold the worth of his own name. Listen, Peter assumes something that Jesus doesn't really tell us.

Well, he told us before this in the Beatitudes, but Peter's saying this. You know what's gonna happen? You've got people that mock you. You've got people that are gonna, they're gonna try to find every fault.

They're gonna make you out to be villains as Christians. They're gonna make you out to be haters of men. They're gonna make you out to be the scourge of society.

They're gonna make you out to be the worst of the worst. They're gonna mock you. They're gonna speak against you.

This is what Peter's saying. Peter assumes these people are gonna speak evil, but when they observe our works, our good works which they observe, the same time that they're speaking against us as evildoers, but guess what happens? By our good works, we spray out the sunshine that they simply can't deny. Now, Matthew 5.16 simply says that the watching world, they're gonna see our good works and they're gonna glorify our heavenly Father.

1 Peter 2.12 says, they're gonna glorify God in the day of visitation. That's an interesting word, visitation. Because I tell you, taken all by itself, it simply means that God visits.

It doesn't mean that he visits particularly with punishment or with mercy. It just means he comes. When you look at the Old Testament, you can find that he visited in ways of judgment and he visited in ways of bestowing blessing.

But here's what's very interesting. In the New Testament, the word visit shows up quite a bit and it's never in judgment. Never.

I was naked, you clothed me. I was sick, you visited me. That's positive usage.

Blessed is the Lord God of Israel for he has visited and redeemed his people through the tender mercy of our God with which the day spring on high has visited us to give light to those who sit in darkness. Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for his name. Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this, to visit orphans and widows in their affliction.

See, the prevailing use of this word in the New Testament is very likely exactly how Peter's using the word. And we know this, you study this word visit, it was used in the early church to mean revival. So basically, look, I take this as prophetic that as we do good, as we as a church strive, how are we gonna let our light shine? What good works are we gonna do? Good works, how are we gonna do this? This prevailing use to pour out his spirit and bring revival, this seems to be the meaning here.

The Gentiles are gonna honor God because of what they, how's that gonna happen? Well, you get people that are wickedly speaking. Can you imagine a day where we go down to the city center and suddenly God is visited? And now all of a sudden people are lining up and you remember how it was when Whitefield would preach? Have you ever read about the miners he preached to? And they'd come out with their filthy, coal-saturated faces and they could see the tracks down through the black as the men wept before. Can you imagine if suddenly, rather than out there and they're spreading out their homosexual banners and doing all their lewd acts, all of a sudden their hearts are broken, they're smitten.

Could that happen? Well, it has happened. And Peter is predicting it happening. And he's making a connection between us shining out our light through our good works and suddenly what's gonna happen.

Brethren, I'll tell you this. I don't think we should have this idea that what we need to do is simply fill our prayer meetings. As important as that is and we need to do that, but it isn't just simply fill our prayer meetings and get down on our knees and ask God for revival.

That we need to do, that we must do. Obviously, we must do that. Obviously, we have a God who hears prayer and we wanna ask and we wanna seek and we wanna knock.

And we trust that if we keep coming and we keep coming and we keep coming, God is going to hear our prayers and He's gonna answer. But what Peter is clearly saying is that often this revival and this visitation doesn't only come on the heels of prayer. It comes on the heels of good works.

This is key that the church is showing this. I heard a man say before, he's a pastor in the US, but I heard him say, the gospel is the power of God unto salvation. Nobody's saved through our lives.

That does not seem to be the feel of the scripture. The feel of the scripture is that the world's watching our lives and our message is very closely tied to our lives. He came into Asian countries to preach the gospel, train men, plant churches.

And he said, but what he saw was it took the kindness. It took pouring of themselves out for the homeless and the stranger and the sick and the minority groups, the people in deep poverty. He said that opened a door for the gospel in a way that nothing else did.

Brethren, we need to be mindful of this. These evil speaking Gentiles, they're watching the conduct of us Christians. Result of having observed the conduct of these Christians.

It's used of God to lead those watching Gentiles to bow down and in some way, honor God, thank God for the lives of these Christians that were used to be light to them as they sat in their darkness. This is really primary aim of our evangelism and good works. We aim to bring people to rejoice in the glory of God.

Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your father in heaven. The goal is this. We want people awed by God.

We want people to notice. And listen, I said before, the primary objective here is the glory of God, but it isn't amazing that as much as we can look in our Bibles and say, God is glorified by judging, by punishing, God wants to get glory by doing men good. I mean, and that's what he wants to have shine forth from our good works.

God is in the, it's like you can't hardly separate the two. God wants to be glorified in his kindness. It's, what we have to recognize is this.

It's not just that God says, oh, I want glory for myself. So how can I get that? Hmm, let me think of the ways. Don't you recognize God is long suffering.

God is love. This is characteristic of God. God has compassion on his creatures.

He is bound to justice and truth, and he will punish sin. But you get the feeling in scripture, punishing sin is something he's almost reluctant to do. Showing compassion and kindness and mercy is something he seems very disposed to do.

And as he does it, people recognize it. And they recognize, oh, God is like that. You see, we have a God that is way better than the God of Islam.

Way better than the God of Catholicism or Mormonism. What these good works do is they show something. Listen to this.

How do we sum up these good works? At Joppa, there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas. The woman was full of good works and charitable deeds. And we know what she did.

She helped the poor. Let him who stole, steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, good works, working good, that he may have something to give him who has need. 1 Timothy 6, 18, let the rich do good, that they may be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share.

Titus, let our people also learn to maintain good works to meet urgent needs. Do you know how we might sum this up? Our good works, sacrificial love. That's how you do that.

That's what the Chinese have seen in Rebecca. That's what Christ did. He went about doing good and healing.

And God gets glorified when man receives good. Listen to how scripture pleads with God. Help us, oh God of our salvation, for the glory of your name.

Isn't that interesting? Help us for the glory of your name. Why? Because God is a God of help. And when God helps, he gets glory because we recognize it and we praise him for it.

You see, this is not at odds with us and our good. God is called, do you recognize? God is calling men and women to submit to mercy. Submit, did you realize God commands us not to go to hell? When God commands us all to repent? If we go to hell, it is against what God has commanded.

He saved them for his name's sake. You see, this is God's glory. It's for his name's sake, for the glory of his name.

You, oh God, the Lord, deal with me for your name's sake because your mercy is good, deliver me. Revive me, oh Lord, for your name's sake. For your righteousness' sake, bring my soul out of trouble.

God himself says in Isaiah, for my name's sake, I will defer my anger. For my praise, I will restrain it from you so that I do not cut you off. It's easy to see how God seeks the good and happiness of mankind from a supreme regard to himself.

Because the reality is God is disposed this way. And when we see it, we esteem it, we glory in it, we love it, we rejoice in it, God is glorified. And so Christians, we wanna shine.

Brethren, I'll just end with this. A lamp is lit in order that it may give light to all that are in the house. You think about it, you have a lamp in your house.

We typically don't use lamps for paperweights. You don't use them as a wrench. They don't really serve well to put food on.

A lamp has one purpose. You have lamps in your house for a purpose and it is to give light. And there's no other purpose in lighting a lamp has God lit you.

If God has lit you, it is not to be put under a basket. It is to be held up high. It is to be put on the lamp stand.

The whole object of lighting that lamp is to disseminate light wherever you go. It's foolish for somebody to cover a lamp. We recognize that.

Our Lord is not speaking of lamps. He's speaking of people who have been saved. We are the light of the world.

Lights are turned on to give light. A lamp is lit to give light. Take a Coleman lamp out when you go camping, you take it for one purpose.

You take it so that you can see in the dark and it really has no other function whatsoever. And the moment it ceases to give light, it has no value. If you have a lamp at home and it's broken and it doesn't work, it's really no value.

It's good for the dumpster. Person who has a name of Christian needs to be a light. A person who has the name of a Christian and doesn't give forth light.

We have verses that deal with having a form of godliness but denying its power from such people turn away. If we find in ourselves this tendency to put our light under a basket. Brethren, when you get out there in the midst of this world and all the darkness, if you feel that hesitation to be light, to draw back, you're trying to avoid persecution, we need to examine ourselves.

Are we really light? Next time you find yourself any sort of tendency to cover the fact that you're a Christian, just simply to please the lost or avoid trouble. You just think of a man lighting a lamp. And stuffing it under a basket.

No brethren, the reality of scripture is this. A city set on a hill. It cannot be hidden.

May God do such things among us, in us, through us that we cannot be hidden. Brethren, the hope and the prayer is that this church will light up Britain and light up these British Isles and light up to the ends of the earth. If God gives us the light, the time, the life, the days, the resources, the grace of God, may God cause us to be a light in Poland and beyond.

God help us. Lord, we pray. Light us.

Bright. Lord, you've ordained that there's good works for this church to do. And I pray, Lord, that indeed, where your workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works, which you prepared before him that we should walk in them.

So Lord, give us all the works you've prepared us to do. Please, Lord. We wanna hasten the day of the coming of Christ.

We wanna buy our much fruit. We wanna bring glory to you. But help us, Lord.

We're weak. We feel our frailty. We feel, Lord, we're prone to wander.

We're prone to be weary and well-doing. We feel it, Lord. Please help us.

Give us the spiritual stamina to fight this good fight of faith all the way to the end. May the good works of this church be abundant. I pray this in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

You're dismissed.

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